



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,  
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### ***GENTIANELLA TENELLA*** **SLENDER GENTIAN**

Slender Gentian is a small, glabrous, annual that is 2-15 cm tall, and arises from a slender taproot. The stems are 4 angled and simple or branched. There are usually several spoon-shaped basal leaves that are 3-10 mm long, and few, if any, slightly larger, opposite stem leaves that are 5-15 mm long. There are 1-few flowers per stem borne singly on long pedicels; stems of small plants are often reduced to single, flowered, leafless scapes. Flowers have 4 green sepals that are about half as long as the corolla. The white to bluish-purple corolla is 8-15 mm long and is tubular shaped with 4 terminal lobes that are about one-third as long as the tube; the inner surface of each lobe has two fringed scales near its base. There are 4 stamens attached to the inside of the corolla tube and a single basal pistil. Flowering in late July-August.

This species is distinguished from other Montana *GENTIANELLA* by having 4 distinct sepals, corollas with fringed scales, and flowers borne on long pedicels in an open inflorescence; reduced to leafless scapes in small plants. Species of *GENTIANA* differ by having corollas that are plicate.